Adjournment motion re : the Visitors to the Mental Hospital.

President.—Next is the adjournment motion of Dr. A. R. Menon. It reads thus:—

"The gross neglect of duty of the Members of the Committee appointed by the Government to visit the inmates of the Mental Hospital, such neglect being repeated in spite of a recent adjournment motion in the Council."

There was an adjournment motion to this effect.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—And we withdrew the motion because it was only a single and special case, and after that, for the last two months, these people never visited. These wretched non-officials, I say wretched, since liberties have been taken away and you posed as commissioners, will not visit it. I moved an adjournment motion in this House on a similar topic, and, therefore, I wanted to show the enormity of their crimes. That is the object of the motion.

President.—The only difficulty is, we will be debating the matter behind their back. I have no objection.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Now I have succeeded in bringing this. I want you to realise the gravity of the situation.

President.—We get representations about these generally, and they say they will suitably fill their places. After some time they do not go. We cannot put compulsion, so that every time they don't go we will have to change.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The Government should have some means by which their period may be terminated. You cannot meddle with them. Bring some sort of an amendment.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—We are taking steps to amend the rules.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—They are wilfully, criminally neglecting their duty.

President.—It is a humanitarian movement.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—What is to be done? As directed, Government is proposing to amend the rules, and I am doing it now.

President.—Can you not say that persons absenting themselves from three consecutive meetings will be removed and other persons will be appointed ? It has come to my notice that there was no quorum though 2 persons were fit to be discharged.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The unfortunate part of it is this. The medical officer in charge recommends certain people to be sane or fit to be discharged. These people know that he has already made that recommendation, and they are in the Asylum because of the neglect of duty on the part of the commissioners. It is that realisation that makes the matter worse.

President.—The non-official visitors must feel their responsibility. They should never be absent in cases like these.

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They must come. Otherwise they should not accept that position.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Why not appoint one or two responsible people ?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Are the visitors the same as we had last time ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—They are the same.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—The same visitors were kept on after the last discussion?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Yes.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Then the fault is not theirs.

President.—The rules have to be amended. Once they are appointed, they keep on for ever. So the difficulty is in the rule.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—They are there till death ?

President.—That is how the rule stands.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Where is this rule, please ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese – In the Fort St. George Gazette.

Mr. A. B. Salem.— That does not apply to Cochin.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I mean the Cochin Government Gazette.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Old associations have not gone yet.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—There are six Government officers. Of course, Government have no control over the non-officials. I use his words. I do not wish to speak about the Government servants. But I submit it is his duty to ask them to submit an explanation to the Government.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I have written to ask them to give a reason. I have not received any reply.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—They knew that an adjournment motion was moved here last time. But they do not care.

President.—Are all these official members Trichur people?

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The majority of them. Only three are wanted for a quorum

President.—There is no rule that any non-official member should be there to form a quorum.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Mr. Balarama Ayyar and the Civil Surgeon were there.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I wrote to them that, if they were not coming, they would rather resign.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—What about Government servants?

President.—Even though we can have no rule with regard to the non-official members, we can have some rule with regard to the official members. If they do not come, they can be suspended or fined, as it is part of their duty. In their capacity as officials they are there.

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Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—In view of the adjournment motion I have got all the matters ready.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Who are the official members ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—The Civil Surgeon, the Diwan Peishkar, the Commissioner of Police, the District Magistrate, and others, altogether 7.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The Municipal Chairman also.

Dr. A. G. Menon.— He is an elected person. He is not an official. He is only a quasi-official member.

President.—He cannot be an official visitor.

One adjournment motion was already moved here.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Government has realised that it is so unsatisfactory that they are now trying to amend the rules.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—That will do, Sir.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—It is a non-working of the rule. There are 6 or 7 officials.

President.—We can ask the officials to resign.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—It has been explained to the Council last time that the officials being on circuit cannot attend the meetings regularly. But the non-officials can attend.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—How many non-officials are there?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Six.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—You might reduce the number of the officials and increase the number of the non-officials, if they think they have not time.

President.—Only three are wanted for a quorum.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—You might remove them.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—We have no power.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—You can remove the officials.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—We are trying to amend the rules.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—I withdraw the motion.

President.—Please don't give room for such motions like these.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I have specially advised the Superintendent, and he gives notice 8 or 10 days in advance.

President.—See that a meeting is held whenever there is necessity for discharging a person. This may be treated as a very pressing matter.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—May I know, Sir, who is the Superintendent ?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Mr. Kunjan Nayar.

President.—I hope there will be no complaint hereafter.

The adjournment motion was considered withdrawn.

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